

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale on Monday, 22nd January, 2018 at 5 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor L.M.Adams – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

H.Boggis	E.George	D.Macey
J.Bonetto	J.Harries	E.S.Stephens
J.Brencher	P.Jarman	G.P.Thomas

Non Committee Members in Attendance

County Borough Councillor M.Webber – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Council Business

County Borough Councillors S.Bradwick and T.Williams – Chair and Vice-Chair respectively of Public Service Delivery, Prosperity & Communities Scrutiny Committee

County Borough Councillors S.Rees-Owen and W.Lewis – Chair and Vice-Chair respectively of Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

County Borough Councillors R.Yeo and J.Elliott – Chair and Vice-Chair respectively of Health & WellBeing Scrutiny Committee

County Borough Councillor G.Holmes – Vice-Chair of Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee

Mr.R.Hull – Chair and Lay Member of the Audit Committee

Officers in Attendance

Mr.C.B.Jones – Director, Legal & Democratic Services

Mr.C.Hanagan – Director, Cabinet & Public Relations

Mr.T.Jones – Head of ICT

Mr.P.Bond – Corporate Facilities Manager

Ms.K.May – Head of Democratic Services

31 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Ms.J.Morgan of the Wales Audit Office to the meeting.

32 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Mr.S.Jones, Elected Parent/Governor Representative.

33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – to note that in accordance with the Members’ Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor G.Holmes declared a prejudicial interest later on in the meeting in respect of Agenda Item 6 – Agile Working – “I am an approved Building Control Inspector in the Private Sector and in competition with the local authority.” Having declared an interest, Councillor G.Holmes left the meeting during consideration of this item and therefore took no part in the matter.

34 MINUTES

RESOLVED – to approve as an accurate record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 14th November, 2017

35 MATTERS ARISING – MINUTE NO.25 – PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN SCRUTINY

The Director of the Cabinet and Public Relations informed Members that the dedicated Scrutiny website had gone `live` today and that he would email the link to all elected Members following today’s meeting.

36 CHANGE IN ORDER OF THE AGENDA

The Committee agreed that the agenda would be considered out of sequence and as detailed in the minutes set out hereunder.

**37 URGENT ITEM
NOTICE OF MOTION – COUNCIL MEETING 17TH JANUARY, 2018**

With the permission of the Chair, the Committee considered the urgent Joint Report of the Director, Legal & Democratic Services and the Director of Cabinet & Public Relations informing Members of the actions to be taken in respect of the following Notice of Motion that was considered by Council on the 17th January, 2018 when it was resolved by Minute No.94 to refer the matter for further consideration to this Committee:-

“Whilst this Council has recently acknowledged the Southern approaches to the Rhondda along the A4119 should be a Gateway to the Rhondda no such status has been afforded to the Northern approaches.

This motion calls on the Council to also adopt and suitable signpost the Northern approaches to Cwm Rhondda via Cwm Cynon. If both valleys are to benefit in the delivery of economic growth, job creation and prosperity it is important that prominent directional signs are immediately placed along the highways in the northern approaches as well as the A4119 in the South.

This Council will take immediate steps to provide such signage as they have responsibility for in the wider interest of those who wish to visit and invest in both Cwm Rhondda and Cwm Cynon along the northern approaches to both

valleys”.

Following consideration of the joint report, it was **RESOLVED** –

1. To authorise the Director of Legal & Democratic Services and the Director of Cabinet & Public Relations to assist in the provision of a report or oral presentation to the next meeting of this Committee, containing information in the following areas:-
 - Key destination signage
 - Promotion of RCT as a tourism destination
 - Actions to attract inward investment into RCT
2. That all elected Members, Co-opted Members and the Chair of the Audit Committee be invited to attend the next meeting in order that they can contribute to this item of business.

38 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME – JUNE, 2017-MARCH, 2018

Members had before them the proposed list of matters requiring consideration by the Cabinet covering the period June, 2017 – March, 2018.

The Director, Cabinet & Public Relations reported on the further improvements that had been made to the Cabinet Work Programme in that a brief outline is now given on the topics to be considered and it now covers a nine month period thus giving greater opportunity for pre-scrutiny.

He reported that the HLF update in respect of Rhondda Heritage Park had been moved from January to February 2018 on the Cabinet Work Programme.

The Director, Cabinet & Public Relations further reported that in respect of the report titled `Increasing Recycling Performance`, following the meeting held between the Chair and Vice Chair of the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee and the respective Cabinet Portfolio holder, County Borough Councillor A.Crimmings on the 4th January, 2018, it was agreed that this item would be pre-scrutinised by Members of that Committee at its next meeting and therefore the findings therefrom would be reported to Cabinet on the 15th February, 2018. The Chair of the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity confirmed that the matter is to undergo pre-scrutiny at the meeting scheduled to take place this Thursday i.e. 25th January, 2018.

County Borough Councillor R.Yeo, Chair of Health & WellBeing Scrutiny Committee also reported that, he and his Vice-Chair, County Borough Councillor J.Elliott had also met with the Cabinet Member responsible for one of the areas that comes within the remit of his Committee, namely County Borough Councillor G.Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Adult & Community Children’s Services and whilst the Housing Allocation Policy is outside

Councillor Hopkins remit, it was agreed that the matter would undergo pre-scrutiny by his Committee.

The Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Council Business stated that the Business Meetings between the respective Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs with the appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holders had recently recommenced and were found to be beneficial to all concerned as also in attendance are the responsible Officers. She further stated that pre-scrutiny of topics contained within the Cabinet Work Programme is fully supported by the Cabinet as a whole and that holding meetings of Scrutiny Committees outside of the Council Chamber was also welcomed subject to the availability of suitable venues/locations.

Following a query raised by a Member of the Committee in respect of operational decisions which are not subject to `Call-in` and which are not publicised, the Director, Cabinet & Public Relations stated that he was in agreement with the Member in that there should be an appropriate mechanism in place whereby operational matters are publicised and this was an area which is currently being discussed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** –

1. To approve the items that are to under-go pre-scrutiny by the Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee and the Health & WellBeing Scrutiny Committee, namely `Increasing Recycling Performance` and `Review of Housing Allocation Scheme` respectively;
2. That the Director, Cabinet & Public Relations present a report to a future meeting of this Committee containing proposals in respect of the publication of `operational` decisions.

JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND THE DIRECTOR OF CABINET & PUBLIC RELATIONS (SECRETARY TO THE CABINET)

39 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME – ENGAGEMENT

In their joint report, the Director, Legal & Democratic Services and the Director of Cabinet & Public Relations outlined further enhancements to the process which provides Overview and Scrutiny with details of the Work Programme and policy developments considered by both the Council's Executive and its Senior Leadership Team.

The Director, Cabinet & Public Relations reported on the proposal to enhance the level of dialogue and information currently provided in that arrangements be made for Cabinet Members and their respective Chief Officers to attend Scrutiny Committee meetings and present relevant information. Similar to the structure and format utilised at other levels of Government, such as

Parliament and the Senedd, Cabinet Members and Directors would attend meetings to present a verbal report on key issues relating to their portfolio areas.

As mentioned earlier on in the meeting by the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Council Business, the Director, Cabinet & Public Relations reported on the one-to-one engagement sessions that had been re-established between Cabinet Members, the relevant Scrutiny Chairs and responsible Officers to further enhance dialogue and the flow of information in terms of the Work Programmes of both Cabinet and Scrutiny,

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED –**

1. That each Scrutiny Committees include Cabinet Engagement Sessions within their respective future Work Programmes and that this be undertaken on a quarterly basis;
2. To authorise the Director, Legal & Democratic Services and the Director, Cabinet & Public Relations to assist in the co-ordination of the responsibilities of Cabinet Members and SLT Members in line with the terms of reference for each Scrutiny Committee, in consultation with Scrutiny Chairpersons.

40 FIRE SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS FOR COUNCIL OWNED BUILDINGS

The Committee received Mr.P.Bond, Corporate Facilities Manager who provided Members gave a verbal update. He reported that Pontyclun Primary School had been identified as having cladding of an aluminium nature and has since been removed and has been left with a timber facade. No decision, as yet, has been made as to what materials are to be used in place of the cladding.

Mr.Bond reported on the Fire Risk Assessments that had been undertaken in a number of Council owned buildings, including schools, theatres and Homes for the Elderly.

In response to a question raised by a Member in respect of the frequency of the fire risk assessments carried out at schools, Mr.Bond reported that following a review that was undertaken approximately 5 – 6 years ago, it was ascertained that depending on the type of building that in most cases Secondary Schools would be assessed on an annual basis and Primary Schools would be assessed every three years.

The Member further queried that should a problem be found during the fire risk assessment and audit checks then who is responsible for taking the necessary action – the Head Teacher, the Governing Body or the LEA? Mr.Bond reported on the respective SLAs (Service Level Agreements) it clearly identifies the responsible persons.

Following a lengthy discussion where many concerns were raised by the Committee it was **RESOLVED** - that a further report be presented to the meeting of this Committee scheduled to take place on the 14th March, 2018 outlining the mechanisms that are in place to ensure that the required actions following a fire risk assessment are undertaken and those responsible are identified.

41 **AGILE WORKING**

Following the meeting of this Committee held on the 13th December, 2016 when Members undertook pre-scrutiny on Digital Workplace/Agile Working and the recommendations and findings therefrom were reported to the Cabinet (Minute No.13 refers), Members received Mr.T.Jones, Head of ICT who presented the report of the Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services which provided Members with an update in relation to the Agile Working pathfinder project which was undertaken within two Service areas that were based at Ty Elai namely, Public Health & Protection and Adult Services. Other small scale Agile Working projects have also been deployed during the same period that include Stay Well@ Home (RCT & Health Collaboration Project), Access & Inclusion, with work currently underway for the Resilient Family Project and Building Control.

It was reported that the projects were initiated on a staggered basis to allow for maximised learning opportunities between services implementations and to deliver plans effectively within available resources.

The Head of ICT reported on the outcomes and lessons learnt from the projects and informed Members that a forward plan is to be developed in Quarter 4 2017/18 which will define an implementation roadmap for Agile Working in 2018/19 which will be aligned to the Council's Accommodation Strategy.

Following the observations made by the Head of ICT, Members raised many questions such as why were some of the Hot Desk sites less busy than others e.g. Rhondda Fach Leisure Centre, when it was indicated by the Head of ICT that as part of the Agile working programme 8 regional `Hot Desk` facilities were deployed through the County Borough and that based on the experiences to date, the locations of the hot desk are to be reviewed. In relation to the Rhondda Fach the suggestion by the Member that the reason for it not being used as frequent as other locations could be as a result of the road links and it being remote

In response to a further question raised by a Member in relation to staff who may have specific needs, the Head of ICT reported that the necessary adjustments have been made to ensure that there is suitable provision in all areas.

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** – to acknowledge the progress made to date in relation to the Agile Working pathfinder project which formed part of the workplace strand within the Council's Digital Strategy.

These minutes are subject to approval at the next appropriate meeting of the Committee

Note: County Borough Councillor G.Holmes declared a prejudicial interest in the above matter as referred to in Minute No.33 and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

**L.M.ADAMS
CHAIR**

The meeting closed at 6.35 p.m.